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homemakers' chat
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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FRIDAY, JANUARY 29, 1943

SUBJECT: "WAYS TO SPARE AND SHARE THE MEAT." Information from home economists of the U.S.Department of Agriculture. Free publication: "99 Ways to Share the Meat."

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Your home kitchen is close to the firing line where American boys are fighting...not close in miles, of course, but in one of the most important food weapons of the war....meat. Today America's meat supply must feed more people than ever before. The armed forces must have meat enough and on time. You can help them get it. You can help by voluntary rationing until the Government's meat ration program gets underway.

You as an American housewife have a double duty in these war times. You have the job of using only a fair supply of meat, yet feeding your family for best health. The way you plan your meats, do your marketing, cook, serve and care for meat in the kitchen counts in making the meat go around. Home economists of the U.S.Department of Agriculture reported recently that in at least 99 different ways housewives can share the meat.

To begin with, make the most of every bit of meat you buy. Fight waste. Be willing to use different cuts and kinds of meat. Get to know them and how to cook them. Make the most of what the market offers, but buy only as much as you have plans to use and place to store. Buying too much meat at a time means that some will go to waste--a loss to you and your country.

Uncooked meat keeps safe only a few hours unless you keep it in the refrigerator or other very cold place. Cooked meat needs cold and careful keeping, too. Ground or chopped meat needs colder storage and keeps a shorter time than other meat.

When you cook meat, one important rule is: Cook at moderate heat and only until done to make meat juicy and fine in flavor. High heat and too long cooking both wast meat--make it dry and hard. Pork needs thorough cooking though not overcooking.

Another important cooking rule for meat is: Cook according to cut and fatness. A tender cut with enough fat cooks best by roasting or broiling in an open pan with no water added. On the other hand, tough meat needs long slow cooking in a covered pan with water or other liquid added. Or you can grind tough meat and then cook it like tender meat.

In the present meat situation you may have to use the same kind of meat often. But it doesn't have to always look and taste the same. You can give it variety by different ways of seasoning and serving.

In more than a score of ways you can make meat go farther by stretching the flavor. Good flavor-stretchers are bread and cereals, vegetables, sauces and gravies.

Meat loaf and meat patties are favorites. Mix well-seasoned ground raw meat with boiled rice or breadcrumbs and white sauce--or stretch the meat in loaf or patties with mashed potato or cooked cereal. Mold the mixture in patty cakes for quick cooking in the frying pan or in loaves for oven baking.

Stews can take a little meat a long way with the help of vegetables, dumplings and stew gravy. One way to make a flavorful stew is to brown the pieces of meat and slices of onion in a little fat and then add liquid. When the meat is almost tender, put the vegetables in. Then you won't overcook the vegetables. Stews need careful seasoning. Serve with dumplings or in the center of a circle of fluffy boiled rice or piping hot hominy. Or make stew into pie by pouring it into a baking dish

and putting on a cover of pie crust, or biscuit rounds, or mashed potatoes or cornmeal mush.

Breadcrumbs carry the meat flavor if you make them into stuffing to fill the pocket of a boned roast, or to space out sparerib sections, or strips of meat rolled into birds for braising.

Hash can be helpful in making meat go far. Mix chopped or mashed cooked potatoes with ground meat. Season to taste and fry in cakes or in one big layer in the skillet. For Southern hash cut cooked meat in small pieces and brown in fat. Then add diced potatoes, sliced onion, other seasonings, gravy or meat broth...and cook on top of the stove or in the oven.

Beans make good companions for meat. Simmer beans until nearly tender, then add ground meat and season. Cook slowly until the mixture thickens. For chili con carne, add chili and other hot seasonings.

Souffles, scallops, soups and sandwiches are other dishes for stretching meat.

Variety meats like liver, kidney and heart are outside the voluntary ration limits. So are fish and poultry. So in planning meals and marketing choose these as much as possible to ease the demand on other meats.

Finally, call on other hearty protein foods to use instead of meat. Call on eggs, cheese, dry beans and peas, peanuts and soybeans. All of these contain protein along with one or more of the other food values of meat--and usually extra food values of their own.

An easy and economical cheese dish is American cheese, melted in white sauce and poured over hot cooked macaroni, spaghetti or noodles. The same cheese sauce is good with vegetables. Another favorite cheese dish is Welsh rabbit--grated cheese, white sauce, egg and seasoning--served hot over toast or bread. A good egg-and-cheese combination is hard-cooked eggs, cheese sauce and spaghetti or macaroni with bread-crumbs over the top baked in the oven.

As for peanuts, they come in the spare-the-meat picture very nicely, too. Try a peanut loaf made by mixing chopped roasted peanuts with chopped carrot or other vegetables, breadcrumbs or rice, and white sauce to bind the mixture together. Bake until firm and serve with tomato sauce.

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